

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NICOSI 01997 201546Z

47

ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1856

C O N F I D E N T I A L NICOSIA 1997

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, OEXC

SUBJECT: CYPRUS FULBRIGHT PROGRAM: JUNE 17 COMMISSION MEETING

REF: A. NICOSIA 1929

B. NICOSIA 1659

1. AS RESULT REF (A) ASSURANCES GIVEN TO AMBASSADOR BY DENKTASH, JUNE 17 MEETING WAS CALLED AT UN-CONTROLLED LEDRA PALACE. PAO HAD ALSO RECEIVED PERSONAL ASSURANCES FROM TURKISH CYPRIOT COMMISSION MEMBER ON JUNE 12 THAT HE WAS ANXIOUS, AND AGAIN ON JUNE 16 PLANNING AND HAD RECEIVED PERMISSION TO ATTEND. ON MORNING OF JUNE 17, HOWEVER, BOARD MEMBER CALLED EMBOFF TO SAY THAT HE HAD JUST BEEN PHONED BY DENKTASH WHO RETRACTED EARLIER PERMISSION TO ATTEND. ACCORDING TO TURK, DENKTASH CLAIMED HE HAD "JUST DISCOVERED" THAT TFSC COUNCIL OF MINISTERS HAD MET DURING HIS MOST RECENT ABSENCE IN VIENNA AND DECIDED AGAINST TURKISH CYPRIOT PARTICIPATION IN FULBRIGHT PROGRAM UNLESS TURKS WERE GIVEN THEIR PERCENTAGE OF SCHOLARSHIPS DIRECTLY (I.E., NOT THROUGH FULBRIGHT COMMISSION). DENKTASH PROMISED "TO TRY TO REVERSE" THIS DECISION, BUT ACKNOWLEDGED IT "WOULD TAKE TIME" AND BOARD MEMBER SHOULD THEREFORE NOT ATTEND JUNE 17 MEETING.

2. IT BEING TOO LATE TO CANCEL MEETING, FULL COMMISSION SANS TURK MET AT LEDRA PALACE TO DECIDE ON OTHER PRESSING

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PAGE 02 NICOSI 01997 201546Z

PROGRAM MATTERS (PRIORITY ORDERING OF CHOICES FOR 1975-76

AMERICAN PROFESSORS, DISPOSITION OF REMAINING FY-75 FUNDS, DISCUSSION OF 1976 PROGRAM PROPOSAL AND DISCUSSION OF MODUS VIVENDI FOR IMPLEMENTING PROGRAM YEAR 1975 ACTIVITIES UNDER PRESENT CONDITIONS).

3. MINUTES OF MEETING BEING POUCHED, BUT ONE COMMISSION DECISION WILL REQUIRE LOCAL ACTION SOON. COMMISSION VOTED TO DIVERT SOME UNUSED FY 75 FUNDS FORMERLY EARMARKED FOR INTER-COUNTRY LECTURERS TO A COMPETITION FOR TRAVEL-ONLY GRANTS TO GRADUATE CANDIDATES WHO HAVE ALREADY OBTAINED THEIR OWN SEPTEMBER ADMISSION TO AMERICAN UNIVERSITIES.

4. ON ITS OWN, BOARD AGREED ON WHAT WE HAVE ALREADY DESCRIBED AS "OPTION C" (REF B) PROCEDURES: ADVERTISING BICOMMUNALLY, MAKING APPLICATIONS AVAILABLE AT BOTH FULBRIGHT OFFICE (GREEK SECTOR) AND THROUGH TURKISH COMMISSION MEMBER, AND USUAL SCREENING/INTERVIEWING PROCEDURES CONDUCTED AT LEDRA PALACE INSTEAD OF FULBRIGHT OFFICE.

5. DURING DISCUSSION, POLITICALLY SAVVY GREEK CYPRIOT BOARD MEMBERS MADE IT ABSOLUTELY CLEAR THAT NEITHER THEY NOR GOC WOULD BE PREPARED TO ACCEPT ANYTHING RESEMBLING SEPARATE STATUS FOR TURKS IN THIS PROGRAM. ALTHOUGH PAO EMPHASIZED LONG-STANDING TRADITION OF AND CONTINUING NEED FOR PARTICIPATION BY BOTH COMMUNITIES, GREEKS FELT STRONGLY THAT ANY CONCESSIONS MADE FOR REASONS OTHER THAN SECURITY OF APPLICANTS WOULD NOT BE ACCEPTABLE TO SPIRIT OF LETTER OF GOC/USG EXECUTIVE AGREEMENT ESTABLISHING COMMISSION, NOR WOULD ANY CUT OR SUSPENSION OF PROGRAM MADE BECAUSE OF TURKISH CYPRIOT POLITICAL OBJECTIONS BE UNDERSTOOD BY GREEK CYPRIOTS.

6. AFTER LONG DISCUSSION, HOWEVER, COMMISSION DID AGREE ON "INTERIM ARRANGEMENTS" DESCRIBED ABOVE FOR UPCOMING TRAVEL-ONLY COMPETITION, AND IF NECESSARY, FOR FULL SCHOLARSHIP COMPETITION FOR STUDENTS BEGINNING STUDIES IN JANUARY.

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 NICOSI 01997 201546Z

7. AS RESULT THESE DEVELOPMENTS, AMBASSADOR (WHO HAS PERSONALLY RAISED THIS ISSUE WITH DENKTASH ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS) IS SENDING ACTING DCM TO PASS PERSONAL MESSAGE TO DENKASH EXPRESSING REGRET THAT TURKISH CYPRIOT BOARD MEMBER WAS, IN SPITE OF EARLIER AND REPEATED ASSURANCES TO CONTRARY, NOT ALLOWED TO ATTEND AND PARTICIPATE IN DELIBERATIONS IMPORTANT TO HIS COMMUNITY'S INTERESTS. AMBASSADOR WILL FURTHER URGE DENKTASH TO

PRESS FOR POSITIVE RESOLUTION TO PROBLEM. IN MEANTIME, COMMISSION WILL PROCEED WITH TRAVEL GRANT COMPETITION AND MAKE ALL PROCEDURES OPEN TO ANY TURKISH CYPRIOT WHO CHOOSES TO PARTICIPATE.

8. COMMENT POST WISHES TO EMPHASIZE AS PER REF (B) PARA 2 THAT WE ARE NOT RPT NOT DEALING WITH AN "EDUCATIONAL" ISSUE AS FAR AS EITHER COMMUNITY IS CONCERNED. CONTINUING TO POINT OUT SOCIOLOGICAL LOSSES OF NON-PARTICIPATION HAS NO EFFECT ON WHAT TURKISH CYPRIOT LEADERSHIP SEES AS DEEPER POLITICAL POINT TO BE MADE. WE ARE ALSO RUNNING AFOUL OF INTERNAL TURKISH CYPRIOT POLITICAL MANUVERING: IT IS LIKELY THAT (A RELUCTANT) DENKTASH WOULD NOT MIND HIS COMMUNITY'S QUIET PARTICIPATION BUT IS CHARY OF GIVING HIS HARDLINE POLITICAL OPPOSITION OR GOT OVERLORDS AN EXCUSE FOR ATTACKING HIS "CONCILIATORY" STANCE.

9. WE CONTINUE TO FEEL STRONGLY

THAT ARGUMENTS NOTED REFTEL (B) PROPEL US TO IMPLEMENT OPTION (C). WE HAVE GONE AND ARE CONTINUING TO GO TO EXTRAORDINARY LENGTHS TO ASSURE TURKS OF FAIR DEAL.

10. WE WILL INFORM DEPARTMENT OF RESULTS OF LATEST EXCHANGE WITH TURKISH LEADERSHIP THIS SUBJECT. CRAWFORD

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